



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 23, 2020

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Kyle L. Guerrant, Deputy Superintendent *KG*
Finance and Operations

Venessa A. Keesler, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent *Venessa*
Division of Educator, Student, and School Supports

SUBJECT: Alternative Education and Innovative Programs (Hours and Days)
Waivers 2020-21 Application Process – MEMO #COVID-19-111

As outlined in Michigan's Return to Learn laws (Public Acts 147, 148, and 149 of 2020), districts must provide students with the educational or course content that would have been delivered in 180 days and 1,098 hours in a school year. Alternative or innovative programs that operate on a calendar with less than 180 days or 1,098 hours must obtain a waiver from the state superintendent.

The state School Aid Act, Section 101(9) [[MCL 388.1701](#)], permits the state superintendent to waive the minimum number of hours and days of pupil instruction for alternative education programs or other innovative programs approved by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). This waiver is limited to alternative education or innovative programs and is not intended for individual students.

The state superintendent will consider applications for waivers of hours for programs that will operate for fewer than the required 1,098 hours and/or fewer than the required 180 days during the 2020-21 school year.

Section 101(3)(h) of the state School Aid Act allows a district to apply for a 50% attendance waiver when the following criteria are met:

- The district offers the minimum hours of pupil instruction as required under this section.
- For each enrolled pupil, the district uses appropriate academic assessments to develop an individual education plan that leads to a high school diploma.

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- The district tests each pupil to determine academic progress at regular intervals and records the results of those tests in that pupil's individual education plan.
- The 50% attendance waiver is only available to districts not operating full K-12 programming.

2020-2021 Application Information

The application for waivers for alternative and innovative programs can be found [here](#). Submission instructions are included in the application. Please use the application rubric at www.michigan.gov/alted as a guide when completing the application. **The application deadline is October 5, 2020.**

By completing this application and participating in the waiver of minimum number of hours and days of pupil instruction for alternative education or other innovative programs, districts agree to comply with the reporting requirements established by MDE.

For questions regarding the application process for this waiver, please contact Steve Nemeckay at 517-335-3199 or by email at nemeckays@michigan.gov or Jeff McNeal at 517-241-6958 or by email at mcnealj1@michigan.gov.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors